

STOREBRO **ROYAL** **CRUISER 34**

Tested by

MODERN BOATING

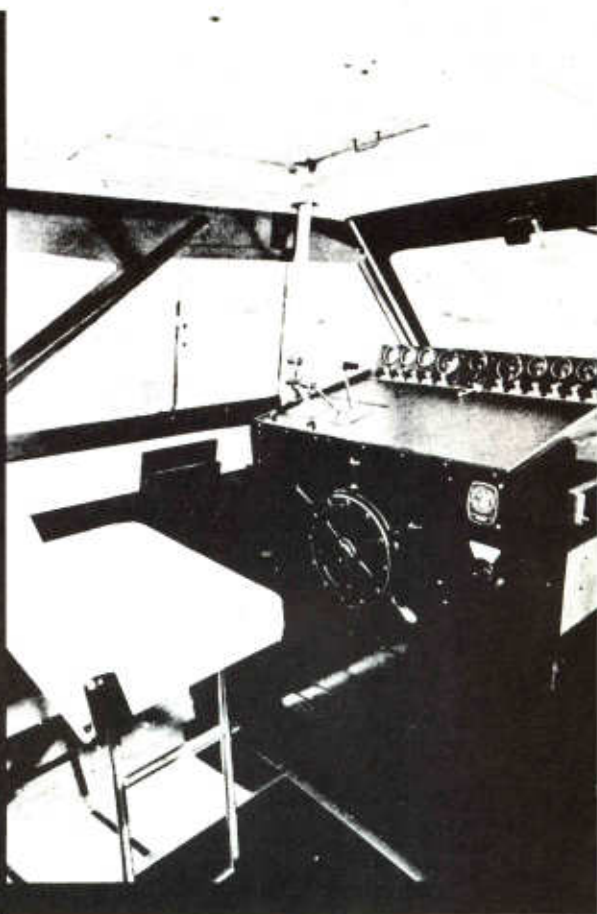
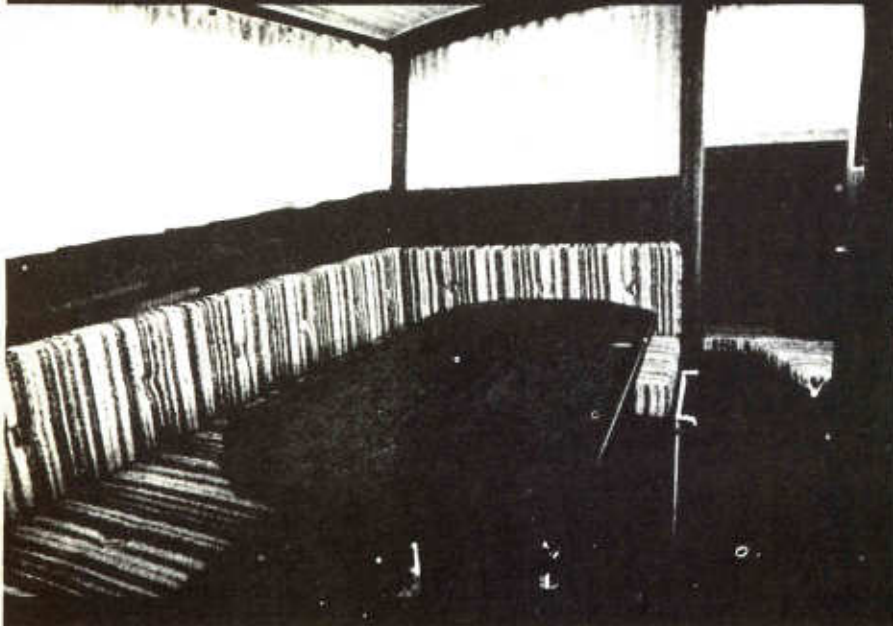
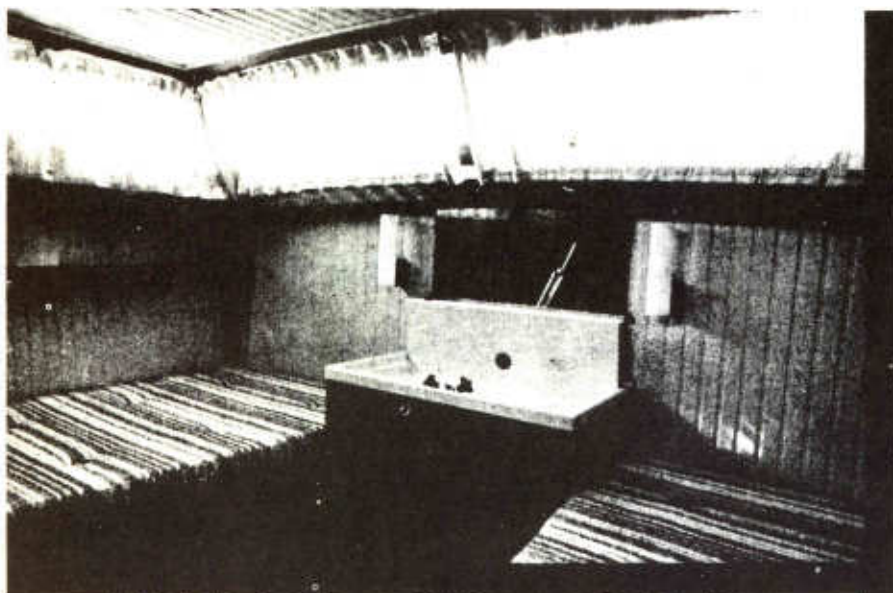
August 1974 issue

and

AUSTRALIAN SEA SPRAY

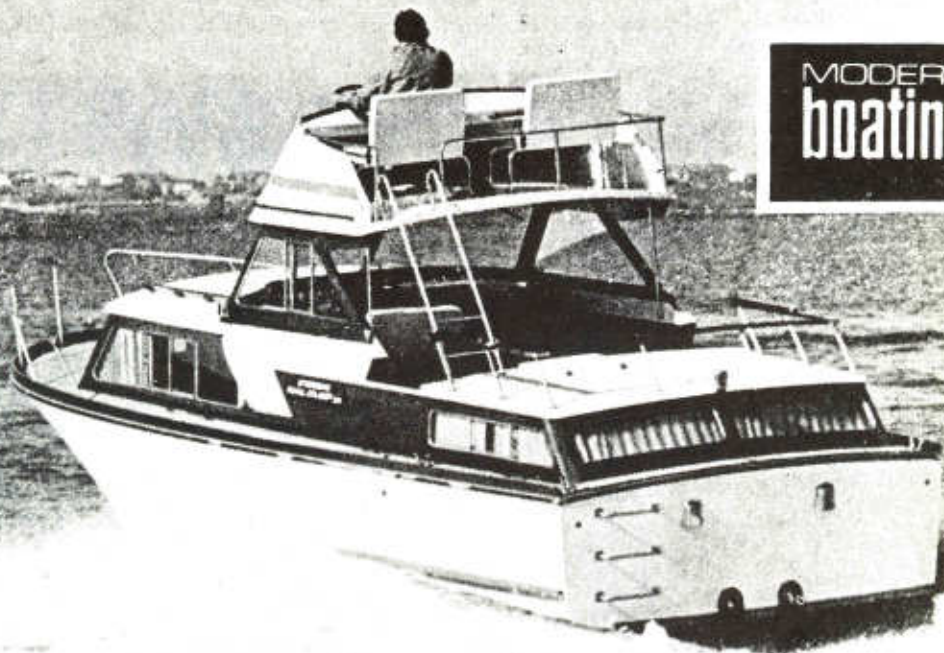
July 1974 issue

at their introduction in Australia



ABOVE LEFT: Stern cabin has vanity table/sink arrangement between the berths. LEFT: Main cabin, looking forward. Drop table is to port, to starboard is galley area including fridge and stove. ABOVE: Helmsman's area reflects superb workmanship of the trim. Quality throughout was faultless. BELOW: Royal's mahogany trim on 'glass mouldings gives attractive, subdued appearance. Boat's semi-displacement characteristics gave easy, loping ride in all conditions.





one of the

SWEDISH

ROYAL FAMILY

The Royal 34 cruiser, built by Storebro of Sweden, is one of the most genuinely elegant and seaworthy power craft it has been our pleasure to drive. Story by Steve Scoles, pics by John Knight.

THE ROYAL range of motor cruisers is one of the most respected in Europe. The boats are built in Sweden by Storebro Bruk, and their reputation has been founded on the exceptional quality and craftsmanship of timber hulls. Today most Royal cruisers have glassfibre hulls, but are fitted out almost exclusively with mahogany, finished to the same high standards as those which left the yard as far back as 1945, when production began. Timber craft, with 25mm mahogany planks copper fastened on oak frames, are still available, but cost about 2½% more than the glass version.

The first of the range to reach Australia is a 34-footer imported by Ideal Marine of Lakemba, NSW. Designed by German naval architect W.H. Wilke, the 34 is a semi-displacement cruiser, a type which many people, including myself, believe the best for extended ocean passagemaking. This type offers good speed equal to most production

planing craft, combined with the sturdy construction and sea keeping qualities of heavier displacement types. They will maintain comfortable cruising speeds in seas which would force most planing cruisers to throttle back to sub-planing operation.

The Royal hull features firm, round-bilged sections with a reasonably fine entry, and has a short keel which improves directional stability at speed and reduces rolling in rough water.

The hull we tested was of hand-laid glassfibre construction, and while we didn't have a detailed break-down of the lay-up we noticed she was built to Norske Veritas standards (the Scandinavian equivalent of Lloyds). The superstructure is of mahogany, but the cabin tops are glassfibre sandwich, ensuring maximum watertightness. The deck is of teak planks laid on 6mm mahogany ply (again to ensure watertightness) and the seams are caulked with a synthetic rubber compound. There are two models, one with an aft cabin, the other with a large open cockpit.

Accommodation on the aft cabin

version tested comprises six berths (including one or two doubles) in three separate cabins. Forward of the open-ended wheelhouse is the saloon, with toilet/shower compartment and galley to starboard and a large six-seater convertible dinette to port. The space under the dinette can be used for stowage and also houses a useful kit complete with tools, spare lamps, fuses and even paint and varnish for minor repair work.

There's plenty of locker and drawer stowage in the galley area, plus space for a two-burner cooker or full oven; choice of stove is left to the owner. An 85-litre electric refrigerator and stainless steel sink are standard and there are stowage racks behind the galley unit for crockery and glasses. The toilet/shower compartment is complete with marine flushing head, wash hand basin, teak floor grate and pump for water wastage. Hot and cold water is pressure fed to galley and toilet and also to a vanity unit in the aft cabin.

The forward cabin has twin V-berths (with stowage under) and two waist-deep hanging lockers. This cabin

DETAILS include stern ladder, stainless rubbing strips where mooring lines cross mahogany toe rail. Reaching flybridge means stepping onto cabin roof, then climbing ladder.

one of the SWEDISH

also has a large hatch providing access to the foredeck and doors providing access to the forepeak anchor locker.

Aft of the wheelhouse is a twin berth owner's cabin with a vanity unit-cum-dresser complete with sink and water supply, large full-depth hanging locker and stowage shelves. Again there's stowage space under the berths.

The below-decks accommodation is completely fitted out with matt-finished mahogany; carpeting, curtains and headlining provide the finishing touches to what is a most appealing interior. The overall warmth and quality craftsmanship reflects once again the Scandinavians' unique flair for design and decor. There is standing headroom throughout.

The wheelhouse is self-draining and comprises a pedestal helmsman's seat plus upholstered seating for another three people. The helm console is fully instrumented and incorporates a chart platform and chart stowage locker. Another useful feature of the console is easy access to fuses and battery switches; too often the latter are fitted in the engine compartment and can't be switched on or off without lifting the engine hatches. For similar reasons we commend the positioning of the stern gland greasers, hand bilge pump and freshwater filters, which are all fitted under one of the wheelhouse seats.

The model we tested was fitted with an optional flying bridge station. This is always a welcome feature, not only because it provides the ideal situation for manoeuvring in close quarters, but also because it allows the helmsman to get some sun instead of being cooped up under the wheelhouse shelter. Unfortunately, though, no provision has been made for a non-slip surface on the wheelhouse top and this upper station can be rather treacherous to walk on. The Royal Importers, Ideal Marine, are planning to fit non-skid strips here.

The 34 is available only with twin engine installations. Our test boat was equipped with two Perkins 175 hp turbocharged diesels which are claimed to give a top speed of 26 knots. The best cruising speed was around 2250 rpm, about 22 knots.

Installation was well up to the best standards. Flexible mounts and good insulation of the engine compartment (including the undersides of the hatches, where the insulation is covered with copper sheet) made for comparatively quiet and vibration-free running, even at peak revs. As with all such engines, it isn't quite so easy to eliminate the incessant high-pitched whine of the turbochargers.

The complete installation, including

the electrics, is well-planned and carefully carried out. There are no loose cables or badly-positioned auxiliaries. The two battery banks (engine and auxiliary) are neatly fixed in glassfibre boxes and tucked away in easily accessible parts of the accommodation, below the steps to the aft cabin. Access to the engines is via large hatches in the wheelhouse sole and regular maintenance items such as dipsticks, injectors, filters etc are readily to hand. Glassfibre drip trays are fitted under both engines. She is equipped with two electric bilge pumps and carries 220 gallons (1000 litres) of fuel in two tanks.

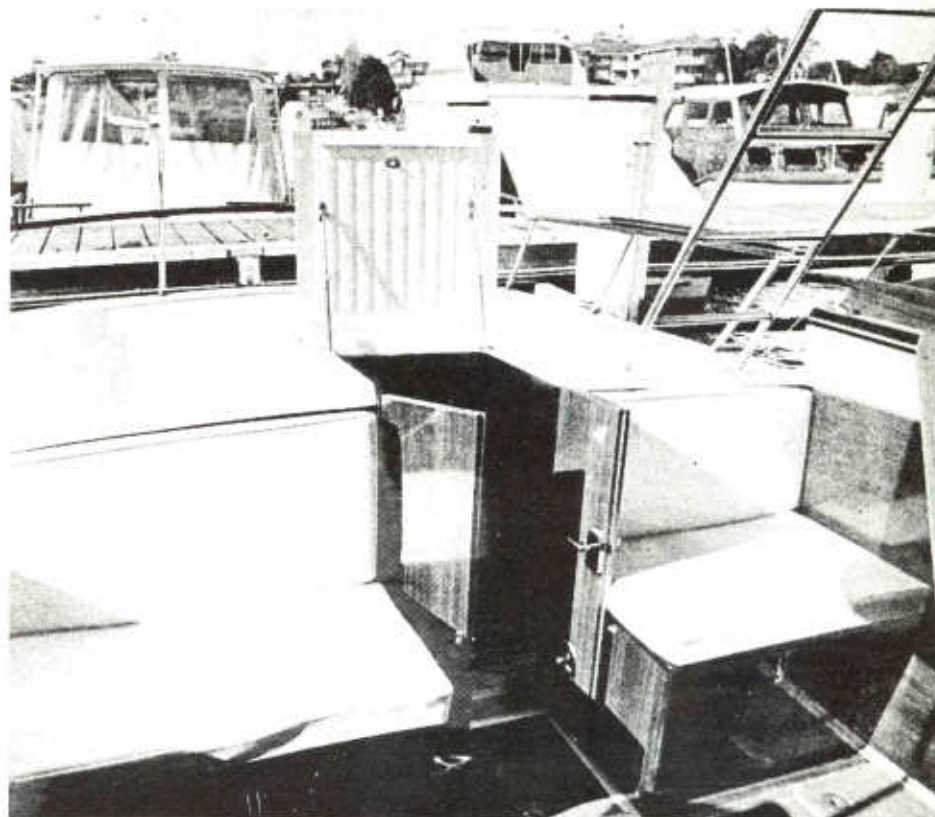
Deck fittings included in the standard inventory include three pairs of sturdy stainless steel bollards, fairleads either side of the bow, a bow roller and large foredeck cleat. Safety glass is fitted all round and there are opening windows in all cabins. Navigation lights, a good selection of interior lights, windscreen wipers, boat hook and mahogany rails are all included in the price. In addition to the hand rails, there's a stainless steel pulpit and safety rails around the wheelhouse and aft cabin top. Access to the flying bridge is via a stainless steel ladder from the aft cabin top and a safety rail is fitted around this upper station.

For our test we motored from Tom Ugly's Bridge out through Botany Bay where we found some large swells and a variety of sea conditions created by backwash from the rocky shores either side of the entrance. At no time was it

necessary to throttle back; the 34 did everything asked of her at optimum cruising speed (22 knots). She remained dry, always felt secure and comfortable, pounding only occasionally as she powered through the peak of larger swells and dropped into the oncoming trough. But even then she never looked like taking green water over the bow.

Confident of the boat's ability in the really big stuff, and keen to demonstrate this prowess, skipper Hans Tholstrup made several runs into rougher surf-like seas off the northern side of the entrance to Botany Bay. It was a rugged ride, for sure, but the 34-footer powered through 6-7ft waves with purposeful (if somewhat uncomfortable) ease. The return, with a following sea, proved a bit trickier. Accelerating ahead of what looked to be a fairly testing swell, we suddenly found ourselves planing down the face of a 12 to 15ft wave which was on the verge of breaking. The bow began to dig in and the boat started a broach to starboard. Foreseeing the seriousness of the situation, Hans elected not to fight the ship and gave her her head, maintaining sufficient speed to keep the bow high while at the same time allowing the sea to break through the stern quarter and under the boat. We turned in the following trough and headed seaward again to clear the increasingly large waves.

It was a disconcerting experience and certainly not the sort of test we would recommend for a boat. On reflection,



ROYAL FAMILY

however, it certainly did demonstrate the Royal 34's sound sea-handling qualities. There are plenty of similar-sized craft I wouldn't relish being aboard in similar circumstances.

All in all, this test did little but to effectively re-affirm earlier impressions of the Royal range. A sound, seaworthy cruiser suitable for safe and relatively comfortable ocean cruising in offshore waters.

In fact, our only criticism of any facet of the 34's handling concerned the engine/throttle controls. Twin lever arrangements (separate levers for throttle and gears) are tricky and time-consuming when manoeuvring in confined spaces and single lever systems more than warrant the slightly higher cost. This does not, however, detract from the craft's manoeuvrability; at idling speeds, steering solely with the engines, she proved no problem to reverse into a confined berth at Glenside Marina. ●

SPECIFICATIONS ROYAL 34

CLASSIFICATION: *Fast luxury cruiser*

DESIGNER: *W.H. Wilke*

BUILDER: *Storebro Bruk, Storebro, Sweden.*

SUPPLIER: *Ideal Marine, Canterbury Road, Lakemba, NSW.*

DIMENSIONS:

L.O.A. 34ft (10.35m)

Beam 10ft 6in (3.20m)

Draft 3ft 1in (.95m)

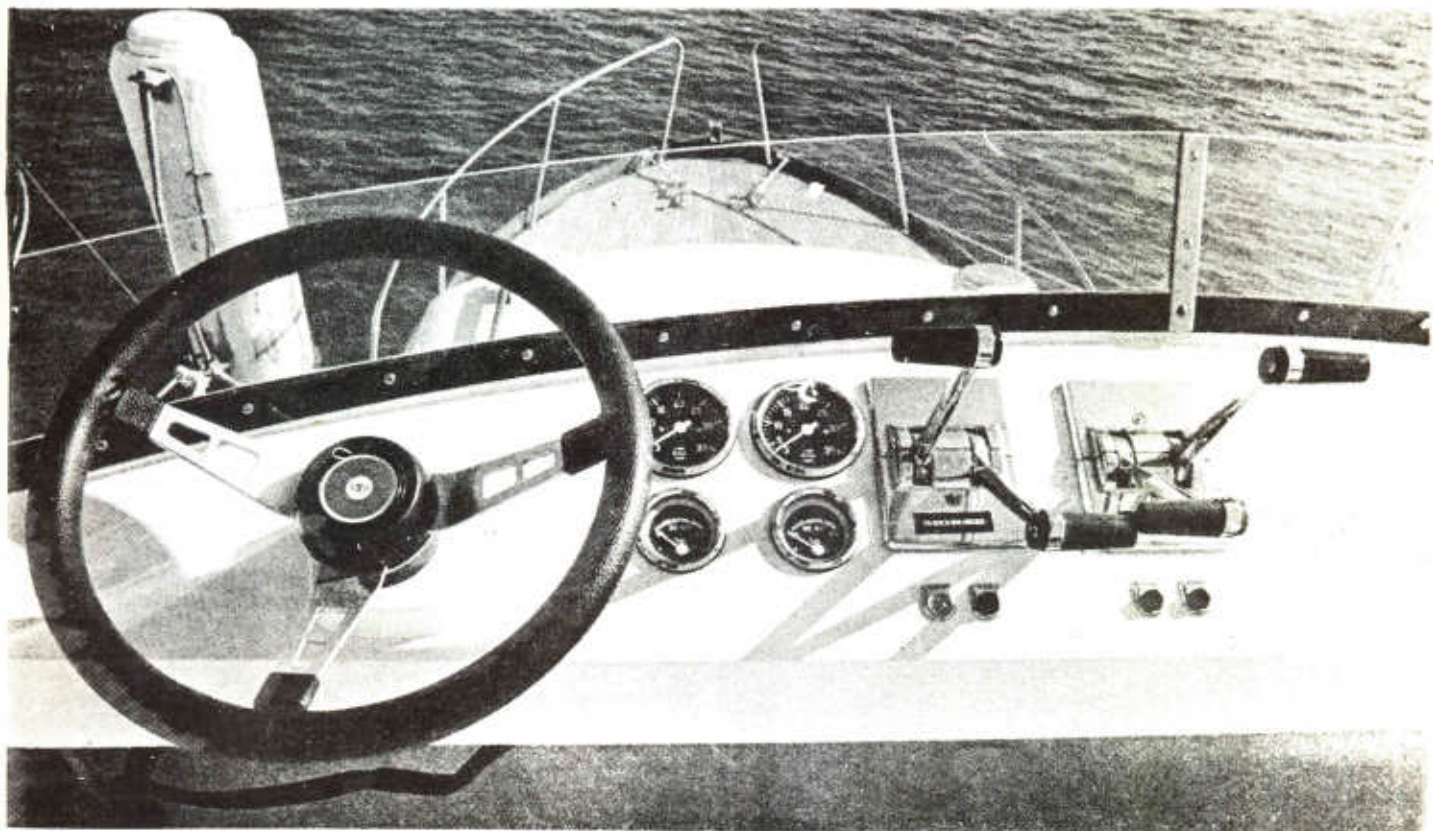
Displacement ... 5.5 tons (5590kg)

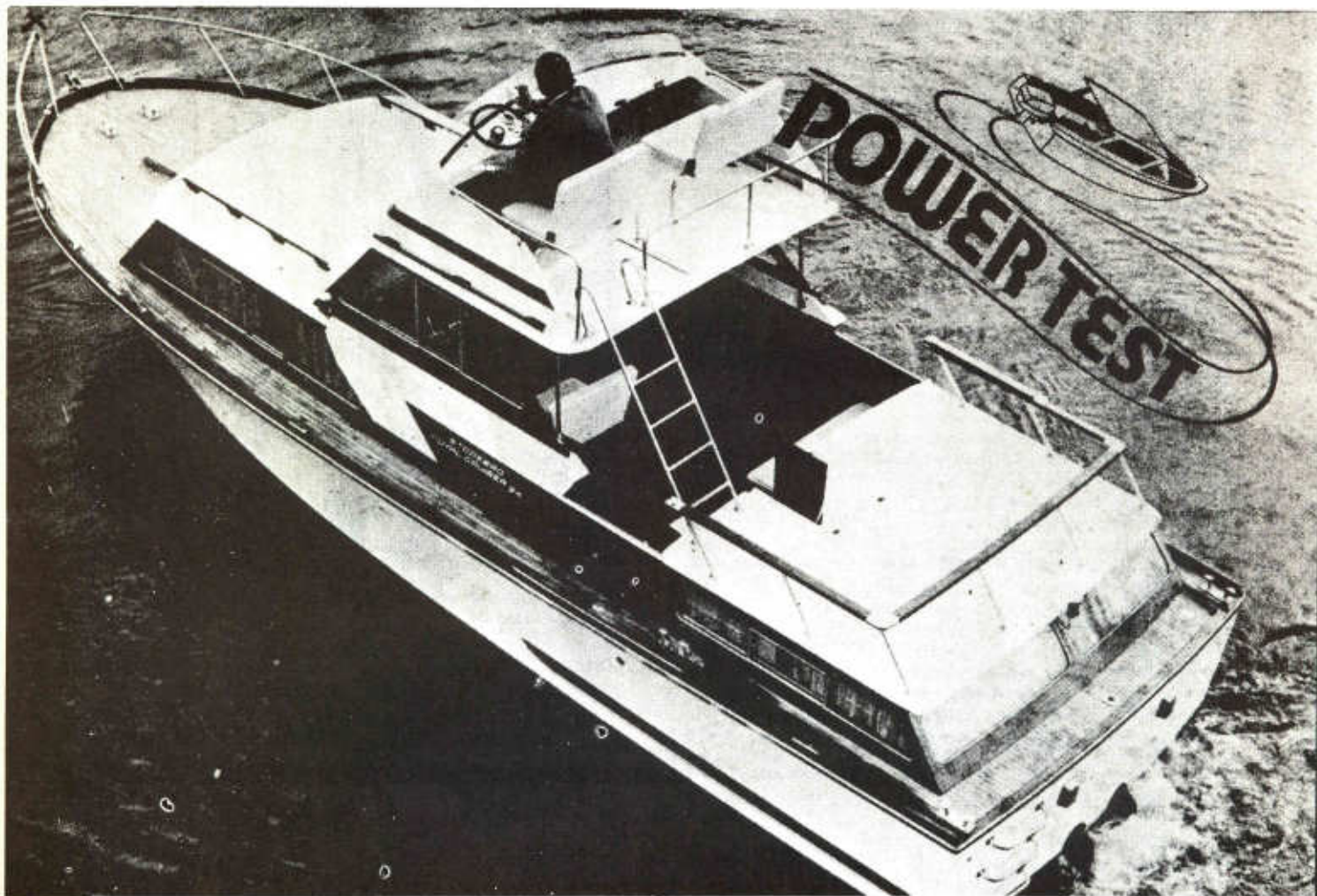
PRICE (as tested): \$73,000

RIGHT: One example of the attention to detail in the Royal 34; complete toolkit, including paint and varnish, beneath saloon seat cushion.

BELOW: Flybridge position is far superior for close manoeuvring.

BELOW LEFT: Aft cabin roof is used for sunbathing and generally laying about. Batteries are beneath steps, stern gland greasers, water filters below portside seat cushion.





STOREBRO ROYAL CRUISER 34

EVERY once in a while there comes a boat test that leaves you with the feeling of just wanting to pack up and leave it all behind. While testing the Storebro Royal Cruiser 34, that's just what we felt like doing — leaving the hustle and bustle of city life behind. This 34 feet of Swedish craftsmanship was absolutely beautiful. It had everything that's needed for just a day's outing on the harbour, or for those weeks of leisurely cruising the coastline or tropic islands.

When we were offered the test of two Storebro Royal Cruiser 34s from the sole Australian importers and agents Ideal Marine of Sydney, we were told that these cruisers have won gold medals at the Earls Court Boat Show in England, as well as the Best all-rounder award and the *Concours d'elegance* in the Cowes Torquay Offshore Race in 1970.

Consequently something out of the box was expected — and we weren't disappointed. The elegant lines, the excellent craftsmanship and high standard of finish showed at first glance why these boats have pleased even the most fastidious boat owners in Scandinavia and Europe.

The Storebro Royal Cruiser is fully manufactured and fitted out in the shipbuilding yards of Storebro Bruks Aktiebolag in Storebro, Sweden. The company started production of boats in 1945 and since then have gained a world-wide reputation for quality. During the first few years, boats up to 20ft were built, but now the programme ranges from 25ft to 45ft offering choices in fibreglass or mahogany hulls, power or sail.

The Royal Cruiser 34 was first introduced in 1966, and has been improved in minor ways over the years.

Ideal Marine have imported two of these cruisers — the

first of several which they hope will find owners in Australia.

Although both boats are Royal Cruiser 34s, Ideal Marine have "played the option game" (to coin a phrase from the car industry) and have some minor differences. One boat is powered by twin Chrysler 225hp petrol engines while the other is fitted with twin turbo-charged Perkins 170hp diesel engines, as well as having the aft "state room" under the raised main deck. Both boats are also fitted with a flying bridge.

While Storebro will supply hulls in fibreglass if required, both test boats were built in 25mm mahogany planks, copper nailed to oak-frame timbers, of which every other one is laminated. The planks are butt-edged and glued to ensure strong sealed joints. All mahogany is impregnated six times against rot before painting.

Decking consists of 15mm teak planking laid on 6mm mahogany ply, with all joints in planks filled and sealed with rubber caulking compound. All cabin roofs, sunbaking deck and flybridge consist of glass-reinforced plastic, either side of foam panels, forming a sandwich panel which is extremely strong yet light in weight.

All finishing timbers, both internally and externally, are mahogany, with a matt finish inside and fully gloss outside.

This exclusive twin test by *Sea Spray* has provided the opportunity to compare performances of diesel and petrol engines in almost identical boats.

With European countries faced with diesel noise limits similar to those imposed in NSW, the Swedes have developed a very neat and effective muffler system for the power units. Diesels can often be quite noisy, particularly when operated at high rpm. But with both diesel and petrol engines tested,

the through-transom exhaust, with the downturn pipes discharging exhaust gases below water level while cruising and on to the water surface at speed, the noise level was extremely low.

The twin diesel at peak rpm of 2500 pushed the luxury 34ft boat at a steady 30mph – even in the offshore swells – and conversation was relatively easy. The sensation of handling this craft from the flying bridge in open waters has to be experienced to appreciate it. The only real noise is that of the crash of the bow wave as the boat surges its way through the seas. The powerful sound of the crashing water and breeze blowing in your face makes offshore boating pleasant in the extreme.

The petrol-engined craft performed very similarly to her diesel-powered sister, although she returned a better top speed, partly due to the fact that the boat was the "sports" version, with no aft state room and consequently considerably lighter.

At 4500 max rpm the Royal Cruiser 34 ran a steady 36mph.

Both boats performed like a small day cruiser in the way they responded to the throttle. There was no need to wind the boats up to their maximum speed. Just open the throttles and you were away.

The beauty of the diesel-engined cruiser lay in the smooth running and smooth response the motors gave to the throttles. There were no "dead" spots or stages in throttle movement. A slight movement of the throttles brought the engine's rpm up or down smoothly, with no jerk or jump up as motors so often do. The two 500-litre fuel tanks fitted in both boats would see you from Sydney to the Barrier Reef in a couple of days and with one fuel stop.

Outside, the boat was a dream to handle – from either the flybridge or the main deck wheelhouse, where the



Far left: The Storebro is the epitome of superb craftsmanship – a boat for making long offshore passages or simply for providing de-luxe accommodation for family boating inshore

Above: The 'sports' version makes a long graceful curve. The hull is of round-bilge design, made of 25mm planking, copper fastened on oak timbers

Below: The saloon provides ample seating for six around a table which lowers to form a double berth; there is stowage space and to spare

LUXURY FROM SCANDINAVIA

helmsman's view in any direction is remarkably clear. A high seat is provided in the main deck with a hinged standing platform to reach the seat for those with short legs. An excellent array of instruments confronts the helmsman, with a large chart table alongside, under which there is dry, protected storage for charts.

The flybridge has its share of instruments. But a fault discovered when we were trying to berth the petrol engine cruiser is there are no starter switches up there. We stalled the engines while berthing and had to hurry down to the main deck to start the motors again – before the boat continued backwards into the wharf. (You should have seen the look of horror on Hans Tholstrup's face as he watched all this from the wharf).

With the twin motors the boats are very easy to manoeuvre in and out of tight spaces, although it took time to become accustomed to the size of the boat.

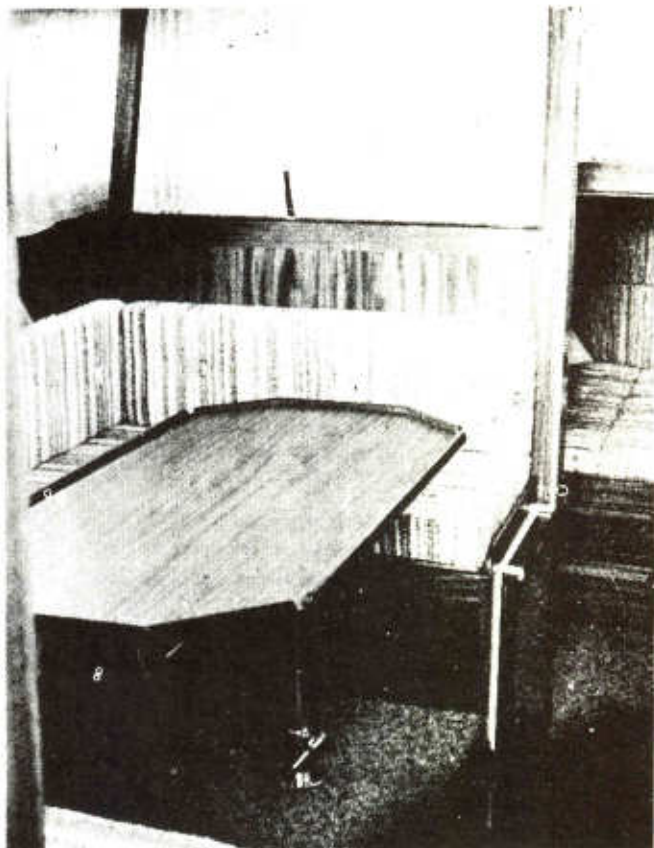
The step-through pulpit make loading and unloading of passengers at the bow very easy. Just point the boat into the wharf and they can step on or off as they please. No rails to clamber over or under and no stepping up or down.

Strong sturdy grab rails and a wide deck make walking from front to back safe and sure even for the most insecure seaman.

The two cruisers were similar internally, with the exception of the rear "state room" which is located below the raised sunbaking deck. Deletion of this provides a very big and open cockpit on the "sport" model.

The boats can comfortably sleep six adults or four on the "sport" version. The forward cabin is V-shaped with single beds, storage drawers under, and hanging lockers. The cabin is separated from the saloon by double doors. Forward access is also provided to the chain locker. Light and ventilation are through the deck hatch.

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Immediately aft of this cabin is the main saloon. It's big, bright and airy — and has everything. The starboard side consists of the galley with stainless-steel sink (hot and cold pressurised water) your choice of gas or electric two-burner cooker and oven, and plenty of drawer and cupboard space with slide out cutting boards. The 85-litre capacity refrigerator is conveniently located under the end of the seat opposite the galley. At the end of the galley is the toilet/shower compartment consisting of vanity bench and basin, shower (both with pressurised hot and cold water) and a sea toilet.

The for'ard end of the saloon provides ample and comfortable seating for six around the table, which lowers to form a wide double berth. Storage is available under the seats with shelving above. Under one of these seats is a very useful tool kit which, apart from the necessary tools, contains spare lamps, fuses and some paint and varnish for touching up minor marks.

The aft cabin contains two exceptionally wide single berths with vanity unit and ample hanging space and drawers for both berths.

The cruisers are tastefully furnished throughout with carpet on all floors including the main cockpit, wool coverings to all seats and berths and curtains on all cabin windows.

There is ample electric lighting throughout, with additional power outlets in all cabins, including the main cockpit and engine room.

Standard controls used are Morse, while the steering system is Teleflex.

After a day out on these two beautiful cruisers our future boating has been spoiled. It is easy to see why these craft have gained such popularity. As we have said earlier, the builders have produced a boat that can cater for a day's trip

or longer holiday passages — from calm quiet seas to a good hard blow. The ability of the Storebro 34 to withstand a blow and rough seas was proved in 1968 in the international *Pavillon D'Or Rally* when the craft covered the 522 nautical miles between Kristiansand in Norway to Torshavn in the Faroes in 58 hours — most of the trip being in winds up to Force 8.

Thirty-four feet of Storebro Royal Cruiser fitted with twin turbo-charged 170hp Perkins diesels, all as tested, carries a price tag of \$73,000. This can be reduced by anything up to \$10,000 depending upon alternative selections of motors.

The sports version, with twin 225hp Chrysler petrol engines and no rear cabin, will set you back \$59,000.

FACT BOX

Length	34ft (10.35m)
Beam	10ft 6in (3.20m)
Draft	3ft 1in (0.95m)
Headroom: Saloon	6ft 4in (1.93m)
Cockpit	6ft 5in (1.95m)
Aft cabin	5ft 7in (1.70m)
Weight5 to 6 tons (depends upon model and engines)
Fuel capacity2 x 110 Imp. gallons (2 x 500 litres)
Fresh water	2 x 30 Imp. gallons (2 x 140 litres)
Twin electric bilge pumps	
Twin fuel filters	
Twin sea-water filters	

Luxury & style from the shipyards of Europe

The ROYAL CRUISER 34' from STOREBRO of Sweden

Twice exhibited, and twice award winner at the Earls Court London International Boat Show. The Royal is available in handlaid fibreglass or mahogany, with teak decks.

Features flying bridge, self draining cockpit, magnificent owner's stateroom, 2 berth guest's cabin, beautifully appointed saloon with dinette, galley etc; Toilet/shower with H & C pressured water system. Powered by two 175 H.P. Turbo-charged Perkins diesels, giving a top speed of 26 knots.

STOREBRO BRUKS AKTIEBOLAG

S-590 83 STOREBRO, SWEDEN — TEL. 0492/301 80 — CABLE "STOREBROBRUK" VIMMERBY — TELEX 3943 STB S